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ABSTRACT

The unique position of the MicMac (American Indian) student in his efforts to cope with both the learning experiences from his MicMac background and those new experiences which are thrust upon him by non-Indian persons in either Federal or non-Federal schools is described. The study also outlines (1) the jurisdictional aspects of Indian education; (2) the organizational structure, as related to the Province; and (3) the philosophy of Indian education from both the non-Indian and the MicMac point of view. The material for this study has come from various sources, including parents, teachers, students, graduate studies in social work and education, and the official files of the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Northern Development and Indian Affairs. Recommendations covering the areas of early childhood education, communication, textbooks, retardation and failure, living conditions, medical examinations, testing of Indian students, experimental research, and drugs and alcohol are offered in the study. A statement on the origin, constitution, membership, officers, and purpose of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians is found in Appendix I, and a brief resume of the MicMac history is found in Appendix II. (FF)

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ED 071838

ROYAL COMMISSION BRIEF ON EDUCATION, PUBLIC SERVICES AND PROVINCIAL - MUNICIPAL RELATIONS

Submitted By

Union of Nova Scotia Indians
Sydney, N. S.

October 8, 1971

RC 006745

ERRATA AND AMENDMENTS OF THE BRIEF

to the

ROYAL COMMISSION ON EDUCATION

1. Because of the recent renumbering of the Sections of the Indian Act, all references to Sections in this Brief will be added a next consecutive number, e.g. Section 91 becomes Section 92; 113-122 becomes 114-123, etc.

2. On Page 13 change sentence "In Nova Scotia we do not know of any necessary program in operation for Indian children" to read: "While there are some nursery programs available for Indian children, in Nova Scotia we do not know of any nursery program operated by the Department of Education under the Foundation Program for our children.

3. Table III - Enrolment in Federal and Non-Federal Schools for the Maritime Region.

	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71
K	143	190	252	320 (+68)
P	139	184	135	138 (+3)
1	315	291	283	309 (+26)
2	280	263	246	257 (+11)
3	272	287	251	231 (-20)
4	227	261	276	251 (-25)
5	255	228	250	263 (+13)
6	201	247	216	227 (+11)
7	218	209	236	245 (+9)
8	137	164	162	155 (-7)
9	95	102	114	107 (-7)
10	77	50	69	81 (+12)
11	29	39	34	54 (+20)
12	14	21	24	22 (-2)
Spec.	7	6	32	38 (+6)
TOTALS	2409 (+130)	2542 (+133)	2580 (+38)	2698 (+118)

4. Add on Page 34 Recommendation 10.

MICMAC CULTURE

Every child has a right to have:

(a) an opportunity for an education adopted to his capacity, interest and needs.
(b) carefully selected and adequately trained teachers.
(c) adequate provision for his physical and mental health.

Therefore, he should be educated and trained:

(a) in the fundamentals of learning.
(b) in the ability to think and to initiate.
(c) in moral and spiritual value
(d) in cultural values.
(e) to live and work with others, and to respect individual and national differences.
(f) to accept the obligations and responsibilities of a good citizen.

In this context, the educational program:

(a) should be designed, developed and revised through experiment and research to promote the full development of the child.
(b) should be developed through the joint efforts of educational administrators, teachers, parents, and interested public groups.

To educate the whole Micmac child, we recommend that the Department of Education, the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, and the Union of Nova Scotia Indians set up a study group to investigate ways and means of infusing more Micmac culture in the curriculum of the schools and to further study the possibility of including Micmac language in schools when Micmac children are taught.

OUTLINE OF BRIEF

1. This brief is submitted on behalf of the MicMac Indians of Nova Scotia, by their official representatives, the union of Nova Scotia Indians. A statement on the origin, constitution, membership, officers and purpose of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians will be found in Appendix I.

2. To enable the Commission to obtain a historial perspective of the Indians of Nova Scotia, from an Indian point of view, a brief resume of the MicMac history will be found in Appendix II.

3. The purpose of this brief is designed to help the Commission understand the unique position of the MicMac student in his efforts to cope with both the learning experiences from his Micmac background and those new experiences which are thrust upon him by non-Indian persons in either Federal or non-Federal schools.

It is also the purpose of the brief to outline briefly:

(a) the jurisdictional aspects of Indian education;

(b) the organizational structure, as related to the Province;

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(c) The philosphy of Indian education from both the non-Indian and the MicMac point of view.

4. We also intend to try to present to the Commission, some aspects of the nature of Indian education in Nova Scotia, even though complete statistics are not available.

It should be indicated here that the material for this brief has come from various sources, including parents, teachers. students graduate studies in social work and education. and from the official files of the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Northern Development and Indian Affairs

5. Most important we want to indicate to the Commission in the strongest possible terms, our concern and anxiety for the shocking failure of the existing educational system in Nova Scotia.

6. Having expressed our concern, we want to express to the Commission our willingness to work with them to change these conditions and submit to them our proposals for specific changes which will partially achieve the educational objective.

EDUCATIONAL JURISDICTION THE INDIAN ACT

Section 91 of the British North American Act gave the Government of Canada legal authority over Indian people and matters which concern them. The full implications are stated in the document known as the Indian Act.

Sections 113 - 122 concern schools, school attendance and religion in schools and in 1960 a commentary on the Indian Act was prepared for the use of a Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons.

Several parts of that commentary are of importance to this brief:

(a) "The Federal Government may establish, operate and maintain schools for Indian children or enter into agreements for the education of Indian children with Provincial Governments, local school boards and various churches". (Section 113).

(b) "The Federal Government may take the initiative in establishing regulations concerning all stages or the educational program: provide for

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the transportation of children to and from school· enter into agreements with religious institutions for the support and maintenance of children attending those institutions". (Section 114).

(c) "Except in cases where attendance is specifically not required (Section 116), all children between the ages of seven and sixteen are obliged to attend school. The Minister can even lengthen this period of school attendance from six to eighteen years of age". (Section 115)

(d) "When the majority of the members of a board belong to one religious denomination, teaching in the day school must be carried on by a teacher of the same denomination. When the members belong to several churches, they may decide to hire a teacher belonging to a particular church by a majority vote at a special meeting. Finally, a Protestant or Roman Catholic Indian minority may, with the approval of the minister, have a separate school or special separate classes". (Section 120 - 121).

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Source - A survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies.

Prepared for the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. Edited by H.B. Hawthorn and in this brief will be referred to as the "Hawthorn Report".

Joint Agreements

As indicated by Section 113, of the Indian Act, the Federal Government is empowered to enter into agreements for the education of Indian children with Provincial Governments and local school boards. These arrangements, known as "Joint Agreements" require the Federal Government to pay directly to the local school boards or Provincial Government, the cost of education incurred by the participation of Indian children in the public school system already established for non-Indian children. The trend has been to more and more Joint Agreements each year and with it a trend which will be discussed later, namely partial integration of Indian children into non-Indian society.

The joint Agreements enable the Federal Government to gradually get itself out of the responsibility for the education of Indian children.

With this objective, some Indian parents are not in complete agreement. While recognizing that possibly better education would result through participation in the established network of Provincial schools, there are fears that it will create

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conflicts in identification. "The danger of a marginal culture and even of assimilation exists". (Hawthorn P.65 Part 2).

Two principles now in effect in drawing up Joint agreements should be mentioned.

One of these is that the local school resources of the Province must be of a quality as good or better that the Indian schools and they must be available. In fact, as will be pointed out later, it will be essential to write into the Joint Agreement, clauses for additional services, as day nurseries, teacher-orientation programs, special remedial reading classes and Indian guidance counsellors. Such services may be well beyond those currently supplied, but if the integrated schools are to be meaningful to Indian children, then such services must be supplied. Anything less will only continue the current pattern of failure.

The second basic principle which must be written into every Joint Agreement is that the majority of parents must consent to their children attending a non-Indian school.

To date, educational administrators, in theory, have always considered these principles essential as a prerequisite before negotiating with the municipal or provincipal authorities.

In practice, however, problems develop chiefly because

according to the Hawthorn Report (P.66 Part 2), there is not a clear understanding by the provincial authorities of the obligations which have been undertaken when the agreement was signed. Such problems have caused disputes later with Indian parents feeling that their children are being short changed on promised educational facilities and services.

Similar problems develop when Federal Education directors "accelerate their integration projects and request of insufficiently prepared people choices whose implication they do not fully understand" (Hawthorn Report P.67 Part 2).

INDIVIDUAL JOINT AGREEMENTS

Each Joint Agreement usually will be different between different school boards, but in all, the school commission or board agrees to:

(1) accept up to a specified number, the Indian students who apply for admission;

(2) ensure that there is no racial segregation.

The school boards also must bend themselves to three kinds of obligations:

A. EDUCATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

(1) Obligation involving the educational rights of Indians, include accessibility of schools, and the school boards are required to accept the enrolment of all children of school age;

(2) compulsory education which means that school boards are obliged to offer courses to all children of school age who are duly enrolled;

(3) equal eligibility to enjoy all school services available which means that the boards must consider all Indians on an equal level and they must be offered all the educational services available to other students.

B. ADMINISTRATIVE OBLIGATIONS

School boards with whom Joint Agreements are signed must agree to a certain number of administrative and financial obligations. First, they must administer the annual budgets while respecting the limits established by the accepted estimates. This involves payment of the school operating expenses including costs of teaching, school adminstration and the expenses incurred for the maintenance and repair of buildings.

The school board may rent additional school services if a request is made for such services, but unless the school board receives express authorization from the Federal Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, they cannot levy school taxes on property assessments.

The reason for this restriction is clear. The Federal Government wants to be sure that the integration of Indian children into Provincial schools will not put any extra financial burdens on the parents. In addition, the Indian people of Nova Scotia do not believe that they should pay taxes of any kind.

The Union of Nova Scotia Indians have recognized the trend towards more Joint Agreements, perhaps directly with a Municipal School Board under an overall agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia.

It is their conviction that a number of essential factors towards a democratization of the administration of Indian education are missing.

First, currently no representative of the Union is involved when an overriding agreement with the Province of Nova Scotia is discussed with the Federal education authorities. Now that a Liaison Officer on Indian Affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia has been appointed, this situation may be changed,

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but it is doubtful in view of the newness of the Department and the burden which will be carried by the Liaison Officer on so many other fronts.

It is believed that the simplest and most satisfactory arrangement will be the acceptance of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians as the official representative of the Indian people of Nova Scotia in all matters relating to Provincial-Federal education agreements. It should be pointed out that the Union is supported by a Province wide setup of education committees which in turn have grass roots base in the reserves which they represent.

It is also the conviction of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians that wherever there is a municipal school board agreement with the Federal authorities, within or outside the terms of any overriding provincial agreement, there should be involvement and discussion with the Educational Representative of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians.

In addition, it is strongly believed that there should be local representatives on any school board with which a Joint Agreement is signed. Initially such representatives may have to be appointed, possibly through consultation with the Chief, the Board Council and the Educational Representative of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians.

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A specific case where there is lack of Indian representation is the School Board for the Shubenacadie Elementary School. At the present time some 130 Indian children are in attendance or some 29% of the total enrolment and yet they have no representative on the School Board. Is it any wonder that only four Indian parents out of 70 attend a Home & School Club Meeting?

If integration for Indian children is to have any positive meaning, it must be related amongst other things to the opportunity for adult participation in the educational decision making process.

At the present time, Indian people feel completely dissociated from decisions taken and too often consider them harmful to the welfare of their children. Such a situation becomes even more galling when they are told that Indians do not have the right to be elected on the school board because they do not pay taxes.

Until this stumbling block is removed, there will be only limited participation of Indian communities in programs of school integration.

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C. ACADEMIC OBLIGATIONS

It is unfortunate that "Academic obligations are completely non-existent in the sense that no standard determines the curriculum, the professional qualifications of teachers or the variety and quality of programs". (Hawthorn Report P. 68 Part 2).

This is a basic weakness in the opinion of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians. The problems which face the young Indian student in entering and particpating in the integrated school are much greater than for a non-Indian student. Consequently, it is essential that the Indian student's academic performance be viewed in this perspective by teachers qualified to make the distinction

It is the conviction of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians that teachers who are engaged to teach Indian students should be given an orientation program in the specific areas of child psychology, sociolgy and Indian history.

We are in complete agreement with the Hawthorn Report where it states that "the educational rights of Indians, go beyond the strict limits of accessibility to schools and school services available. They also include the right to quality and diversity of essential school services in the educational centres of each province". (Hawthorn Report P 68 Part 2).

When the school board involved is aware of the special needs of Indian children, no problem arises. Such cases are rare, however, although in the public schools at Maria and Restigouche in New Brunswick, the local school boards have organized nursery schools for the Indian children in order to make it easier for them to learn French.

Since the language spoken at home is still MicMac, Indians of school age cannot go straight into first grade without risking failure or extremely poor results. In another section we will submit some startling figures of the high failure rate at this stage.

While nursery schools are increasing in number and are proving their worth in helping the Indian child to be better prepared to grasp the nature of the English taught programs in the kindergarten and Primary grades, they represent only one approach to the overall problem of adjustment. It is unfortunate that they are still not thoroughly understood for their socializing function.

In Nova Scotia we do not know of any nursery school in operation for Indian children.

One of our strongest recommendations and emphasized elsewhere is that such schools should be an integral part of

the uneducational background.

It is the recommendation of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians that a Tripartite Committee, consisting of a representative of the province of Nova Scotia, the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and the Union of Nova Scotia Indians should do further research and study on Joint Agreements. The experience of other Provinces is now available and careful consideration should be given to the quality and character of the academic services agreed to, the financial and administrative problems and how they were resolved.

INDIAN EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

We have endeavoured to be as conservative as possible in our appraisal of Indian education in the Province of Nova Scotia.

An effort has been made to obtain the most recent figures from visits to both integrated and local schools, from the Director of Education for the Indian Affairs Branch of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development located at Amherst and from direct contact with board councils, school committees and sometimes individuals. As a background, we have again found the Hawthorn Report invaluable although it does not contain statistics which directly refer to the Province of Nova Scotia.

INDIAN EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

The Available Facts:

I. The enrolment by grades for Federal and Non-Federal Schools for the school year, 1970 - 71 is shown below in Table No. I:

TABLE I

ENROLMENT OF INDIAN PUPILS BY GRADE IN FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL SCHOOLS, 1970 - 71

	Federal	Non-Federal	Total
Kindergarten	46	83	129
Primary	81	57	138
Grade One	78	63	141
Two	58	59	117
Three	40	55	95
Four	71	42	113
Five	55	45	100
Six	50	41	91
Seven	25	85	110
Eight	6	62	68
Nine	-	52	52
Ten	-	48	48
Eleven	-	30	30
Twelve	-	11	11
Special	-	32	32
Total	510	765	1,275

The shocking implication of the above figures should be immediately apparent.

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Out of a total of 1,275 Indian children in all grades, in both Federal and Provincial Schools, only 43 survived through a 14 year cycle to enroll in either Grade XII or the Special Course.

Percentage wise, the figure was 3.4% In 1966, the Hawthorn Report P. 130 Part 2 provides a figure of 6% based on statistics which showed the progress of Indian students through a twelve year school cycle, from 1951 to 1962. See APPENDIX___ for the full table.

In this period 8,441 Indian students out of a total of 8,782 who enrolled did not complete high school.

The loss of school population is therefore 94% in 1962 while in Nova Scotia in 1970 - 71, it was 96.6%.

The National rate of dropout for non-Indian students is approximately 12%.

It must be said immediately that the two figures of attrition between Indian and non-Indian are not fully comparable, since late entry, language difficulty and other factors make such a comparison unressonable.

The essential conclusion from these figures is that while more Indian students are entering school each year and are

staying in school longer, it is vitally necessary to intensify efforts to equalize educational opportunity for Indian students because the dropout rate is destroying any hope of Indian people achieving economic and educational parity with non-Indian society.

TABLE II

ENROLMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA FEDERAL

AND NON-FEDERAL SCHOOLS

	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71
Kindergarten	38	39	86	129 (+43)
Primary	139	184	135	138 (+ 3)
Grade One	146	133	141	141 -
Two	104	126	110	117 (+ 7)
Three	117	113	127	95 (-32)
Four	99	110	105	113 (+ 8)
Five	116	93	86	100 (+14)
Six	101	115	94	91 (- 3)
Seven	114	102	103	110 (+ 7)
Eight	66	86	76	68 (- 8)
Nine	49	54	55	52 (+ 3)
Ten	33	22	31	48 (+17)
Eleven	13	20	13	30 (+17)
Twelve	3	8	13	30 (+17)
Special	6	-	19	32 (+13)
Total	1,144(+23)	1,205(+61)	1,194(-11)	1,275(+81)

According to sample studies made by the Hawthorn Report P. 131 Part 2, approximately 80% of Indian children repeat Grade One. While the Table II of Nova Scotia Indian students does not appear to show as high a figure, it is suggested to the Commission that this area is worth further research and study. What is

important is that a pattern of failure begins to develop immediately from Grade One and remains consistent through to Grade Eight. In Grade Eight a large number of Indian students leave school. The remainder continue to Grade Ten, usually repeating one or two years, at which point most leave school; entirely and approximately 20% go into vocational institutes. The few students who continue through Grade Ten, usually do adequately in Grades Eleven and Twelve and complete high school.

TABLE III

ENROLMENT IN FEDERAL AND

NON-FEDERAL SCHOOLS

FOR THE

MARITIME REGION (see Table)

ENROLMENT IN NOVA SCOTIA FEDERAL AND NON-FEDERAL SCHOOLS

	1967/68	1968/69	1969/70	1970/71
K	38	39	86	129(+3)
P	139	184	135	138 (+3)
1	146	133	141	141
2	104	126	110	117 (+7)
3	117	113	127	95 (-32)
4	99	110	105	113 (+8)
5	116	93	86	100 (+14)
6	101	115	94	91 (-3)
7	114	102	103	110 (+7)
8	66	86	76	68 (-8)
9	49	54	55	52 (-3)
10	33	22	31	48 (+17)
11	13	20	13	30 (+17)
12	3	8	13	11 (-2)
Spec	6	-	19	32 (+13)
TOT:	1144(+23)	1205 (+61)	1194(-11)	1275 (+81)

The figures shown for the Maritime Region are the same as for Nova Scotia and if anything, they are even more discouraging. Their significance increases when one recognizes that while the enrolment is increasing and will continue to climb because of the higher birth rate, the percentage of dropouts is not decreasing.

It is against this background that we are tempted to say like Douglas Cardinal - "Educators - Your system have failed"[1].

Cardinal states that Indian Students are casualties, rather than failures. He contends that "the very textbooks, the curriculum and the teachers are racist and are a vehicle to program Indian students into believing that we, as Indians, are inferior beings, incapable of looking after our own affairs:- You who reflect the prevalent attitudes of the dominant society: you guardians of knowledge, principles, spirituality, environment, are not fit guardians of our children. Your programs are irrelevant to our people".

If these appear to be harsh words, look again at the figures, 96.6% DROPOUT. Most important, try to visualize what that figure means in terms of alienated, mutilated personalities. - Our Indian children.

Fottnote[1]: Education Magazine - Canada (December, 1970) P. 23

THE EDUCATION OF THE INDIAN CHILD

In recent years educational specialists have become increasingly aware of the problems inherent in educating children of minority groups in institutions designed to meet the needs and standards of the majority or the dominant culture.

To eliminate or reduce school dropouts of the proportion which exist now in Nova Scotia it is essential that the Commission has a clear understanding of the basic causes and the possible solutions. Some of these latter are school work programs, pre-school education, remedial program, increased guidance, smaller teacher-pupil ratio, better qualified teachers, community development and adult education. The long range results of such programs are still not definite but initial analysis indicate that where such programs are in operation, there is greater involvement and participation on the part of the Indian child and his attitude towards education become more positive.

This Indian population of Nova Scotia is a small minority group in the double sense that MicMac Indians are culturally distinctive and at the same time represent an economically deprived minority as well.

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When an Indian child goes to school for the first time he is at an immediate disadvantage whether he goes to a federal or non-federal school. This is due to the early socialization which he receives and which is so different from the socialization of the non-Indian child.

Schooling according to the Hawthorne Report (P. 108 -Part 2) "Presents a clear discontinuity of experience for the Indian child; such discontinuity contributes to the retardation of 80% of the Indian children in the first grade and to the average age-grade retardation of a minimum of 2.5 years behind the average non-Indian student by the end of the eighth grade."

Discontinuity of experience is directly attributed to the difference in backgrounds of MicMac parents from non-Indian backgrounds and in different expectations and socialization processis of the child.

Socialization takes place primarily in the family situation but it is also has broader aspects. The values which the MicMac parents pass on to their children reflect the values acceptable to the Indian social group of which the MicMac family is one unit. The children learn to meet the expectations of the group and to act in terms of their shared values. So do the children of non-Indian communities.

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Of necessity, basic roles are ascribed by adults and acquired by children. In this context we would like to refer directly to the Hawthorne Report (P. 110 - Part 2) For all children, the basic roles are acquired within the family group and then within the extended social group. As the child grows and develops he assumes additional roles as he encounters new situations. For most children the new situations are not discontinuous with old ones and it is a process of role extension rather than the addition of a new role. For example the non-Indian child entering school has in one sense, already been a student, even though the formally structured academic behaviour is new in many ways and requires adaptation of behaviour. It has continuity with old patterns."

For the MicMac child however, the school is an entirely new phenomenon with new cultural items. Some of his previous patterns of learning are not of value in the school situation. In consequence, the MicMac child is faced with the problem of grasping new patterns of learning and of acquiring a new role in an unfamiliar setting.

We have shown statistically how few MicMac children are able to overcome these handicaps.

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In this brief it is not our purpose to submit a socialogical treatise and at this point we want to specify the course of action which would improve the education of MicMac children.

A. PHILOSOPHY FOR INDIAN EDUCATION IN NOVA SCOTIA

We would like to emphasize that the limitations of time in preparation of this brief has not permitted as exhaustive an examination of Indian education as we would like to have undertaken.

For example, we have not dealt to any extent with the all important economic question, the ever increasing dependence of reserves on the outside world for economic survival. This affects Indian education. The great majority of reserves in Nova Scotia absorb relatively little of their own available manpower. The result is that the majority of workers have to seek employment off the reserve or be unemployed most of the year. This mobility often is detrimental to the children in the family but also helpful in other ways.

In the introducation to the study "Welfare Dependency on an Indian Reserve", an unpublished Master of Social Work thesis, at the Maritime School of Social Work, Dalhousie University, Halifax, (April, 1971) -

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the author, Gregory Johnson, who is also Vice President of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians, makes the following statement. "Indians in Nova Scotia are not enjoying what could be considered a fair opportunity to participate in Nova Scotian or Canadian life. The high employment rate (75% for Nova Scotia); high dropout rate before finishing school (94% for Canada), low income (less than $1,000 a year for over half the Indian population of Canada) are merely surface indicatiors of this fact."

Mr. Johnson goes on to say: "Not only are these people non-participants in general Nova Scotian society, they can no longer have their own unique way of life. Hunting and trapping can no longer support people in Nova Scotia. It appears there is no call for the skills which are traditionally Indian; this leaves the Indian with the only alternative (if he is to be self-supporting), of "making it" in the White Man's world. Despite apparent attempts by the Federal offices to do just that, a Reserve continues to have the atmosphere of a slum ghetto."

And to quote the Hawthorne Report again: "Poverty is considered a dominant factor in the disintegration of a community. Not only do Reserves show this tendency but do so to an even greater extent than economically backward communities. The undesirable effects of poverty appear all the more marked because most Indian communities are artifically constituted and

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do not posess the structural restraints found in natural communities." Hawthorn Report P. Part 2

We have also not done full justice to the importance of the inequality of opportunity in education for Indian students, not only because they are Indians but because they come from rural areas. We think it is of importance to recognize this factor in education not only for Indian children but for all rural youth. Perhaps the most striking information is found in the report on "Rural Disadvantaged Youth." which should be obligatory reading for anyone seriously considering this problem.

We have also not covered subjects like, attendance and reasons for absenteeism, including the attitude of Indian parents toward education; the attitude of Indian students and parents toward early school leaving; the problems of Indian students as perceived by parents and students; the aspiration, self image and vocational goals of Indian youth. Each of these points is worthy of a discussion by itself and it is hoped that they can be dealt with orally at the time this brief is presented.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. We have endeavored to stress as strongly as possible, the difficulties which Indian children have to overcome in their first year of school and to prevent the syndrome of failure from

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developing. We have indicated that if not stopped, then, by the fifth to the seventh grade the Indian child has experienced so much failure and is so demoralized that he withdraws from the learning process as much as he can and aspires to leave school at the first opportunity. This we maintain is not education.

We think that the Indian child should have the same opportunity to succeed in his first years at school as any other child. It is maintained that even though, kindergarten programs and primary grades are in operation in a number of Nova Scotia Federal and non-Federal schools, in which Indian children are enrolled, these areas should be staffed by people who are fully conscious of the needs of the Indian child and the program which they require to adequately meet their challenges in the coming years.

It is not believed from our own experience and from studies which have been made that kindergarten and primary groups are enough.

According to the Hawthorne Report, (P. 148, Part 2.) "The type of program which would seem best suited to the needs of the Indian child would be a nursery school and kindergarten

program. A reserve nursery school and a public school kindergarten might be equally effective. It would accomplish several things. It would allow a specially trained teacher to teach the children the things they need to know by school entering time. It would expand the horizons of the child through direct experiences with a variety of play media and books, records, and short trips in the locality.

If such nursery schools could be established on a co-operative basis, parents could be involved in programming and in the educational process. This involvement might lead to continued interest in the child's public school experience which would increase understanding and communication between the home and the school to everyone's benefit.

Such programs might also stimulate Indian adults to improve their own educational level both in order to be able to help their children and for their own general benefit.

It is important to note that the nursery and kindergarten teachers can use material and ideas from the background of the child with more freedom than the average public school teacher. This would enable the child to have an initial educational experience which does not circumscribe his sense of worth of or completely devalue his world. At the same time the child could become familiar with the demands of the larger world with regard to routines and procedures within a classroom in the minimal way that they are followed in such classes."

Communication

2. The success and failure of any child in a school system is dependent upon his own ability; the teaching ability of the staff and the ability of each to communicate in a variety of ways.

It is recommended that because the teacher plays such an important role in dealing with Indian children, they be given sufficient training in psychology, sociology and anthropology to make them aware that the behavior of a child from minority group is not necessarily deviant but is simply different.

This knowledge might be obtained through inservice training, through teacher exchange programs through conferences in the schools with consultants brought in as advisors. We are certain that most of the universities would be only too willing to co-operate through the use of the academic personnel in various departments.

We also recommend that in order to widen the areas of communication, co-operative inservice programs and teacher exchange programs could be written into the joint agreements between the Indian Affairs Branch and the local school board.

Textbooks

3. Innumerable situation in our environment assist us to formulate attitudes. And once acquired, they are difficult to change. Some attitudes can have a far-reaching effect on our lives, especially the ones we develop toward people, or groups of people. We noted elsewhere in this brief that parents play a major role in the formation and reinforcement of proper attitdes of their children. His respect for his Indianness should not be destroyed or mutilated by teachers, administrators or by curriculum content. The continuing concern expressed by MicMacs indicates a widespread belief not only that many textbooks are biased but that they affect the formation of attitude in all children who use them

We therefore strongly recommend:

(a) that books be sought or commissioned if necessary which provide scholary and up-to-date information on the history and status of the contempory Indian.

(b) that the Departmental Program of Studies, especially in the area of Social Studies, be revised to give more emphasis to the role and status of the MicMac as well as other monority groups.

(c) that the Department of Education develop guidelines for publishers and authors which would prevent unjustified

negative or discrimanatory treatment of the Indian or other minority groups.

(d) that the Department of Education immediately establish a standing committee consisting of representatives from the Department, the Nova Scotia Human Rights Commission and the minority communities for the purpose of evaluating the present textbooks.

Retardation and Failure

4. It has been established that the role of failure for Indian children far exceeds that of white Canadian children and that the primary reasons are cultural and social rather than intellectual. (Hawthorn Report P. 152 Part 2)

We recommend strongly:

(a) the growing trend towards the use of non-graded classes. We believe that this is one more way of preparing children to learn at their own rate over a three year period. This enables many children who are not ready for school and who are immature to overcome their lack without the negative experience of being typed as a failure in their first year of school.

(b) Persistent failure and increasing retardations discourage both teachers and students. They contribute to negative attitudes

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towards school and are crucial in deciding whether a child will stay in school or drop out.

(c) it is recommended that remedial and special education classes be establised and that the Indian Affairs Branch in Joint Agreement with School Board and the Province be prepared to provide special grants to the school boards. Such remedial services once established could benifit all children. Indian and non-Indian alike. Such a policy of grants would be an incentive to the School boards to co-operate and to have specially trained personnel to set up special programs.

Living Conditions

5. The low levels of living of various Indian groups contribute to the physical and emotional undermining of the child and affect his school performance.

Too few receive medical examination prior to school entry. Many children suffer from marginal eye sight and hearing defects and while efforts are made by the Indian Affairs Branch to arrange facilities for the most obvious disabilities as deafness and blindness there are many who try to operate without help in this marginal zone.

Today we know that children without proper nutrition may have chronic low grade infections which can contribute to their apathy and ability to keep pace in school.

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The lack of privacy in over crowded houses disrupts sleep and any attempts to study. The economic status of the family also determines the quantity and type of food the child receives and whether there are sufficient clothes for the child to attend school in all types of weather. The availability of proper clothing also affects the attendance of older children in Public and High Schools who feel embarrassed in the clothes they have obtained through bargain and rummage sales. (Hawthorn Report P. 151 Part 2)

It is recommended that when it is not now being done that arrangements should be made so that Indian children can obtain lunches through the school without the red tape and hand out attitudes with which such projects are carried out. An Indian child may be fed materially but may be damaged in his own concept of himself.

Medical Examination

6. It is recommended that Indian children entering first grade receive a through medical examination. In some places this is already being done.

Testing of Indian Students

7. All schools, whether Federal or Provincial have a ~~listing~~ testing program usually based on group pencil and paper ~~lists~~ tests. More and

more evidence is accumulating that such tests are not applicable to children from all backgrounds. It has been indicated that they cause a great deal of personal harm to the child and serve little positive purpose.

It is recommended that the Indian Affairs Branch and the Provincial Public Schools remove all tests from their schools as being neither valid nor reliable for Indian students.

Experimental Research

8. It is recommended that a constant program of research exist in which problems related to the teaching of Indian students in Public Schools continue to be investigated.

It is also suggested that the Indian Affairs Branch should contribute to such programs or provide an incentive to further development through special grants, i.e. Atlantic Institute of Education.

Drugs and Alcohol

9. We believe that much that could be said on these topics has been said in the LeBain Commission Preliminary Report.

In both alcohol and drugs we recognize the need for awareness

and understanding on the part of students, teachers and parents.

We recommend that the Provincial Government encourage the development of seminars, study groups for teachers and parents and audio visual aids for classrooms with the fullest involvement possible on the part of the students.

APPENDIX I

The Union of Nova Scotia was organized in 1969 by the Indians of Nova Scotia as the representative body for all of the Indians in the Province of Nova Scotia. The Board of Directors is made up of the chiefs of all the reserves in Nova Scotia. So that each Chief, during his term of office, serves on the Board.

The Executive officers of the organization are elected by a majority vote of the membership at a General Assembly. Their duties are as laid down in the Constitution of the Union of Nova Scotia Indians. The spokesman for the organization is the President, and in his absence, the Vice-President.

Since its inception the Union Of N.S. Indians has taken on the task of administering several programs which were previously administered by Government Departments. Funding for these programs still comes from the originating departments. Administration funds for the organization come from the Federal Department of the Secretary of State Some of the programs administered are Community Development, Communications, Treaty & Rights Research, Medical Health Liaison, Alcohol & Drug Education, and Court Work. Studies have been conducted by the organization in Housing, Economic Development and Education.

The most important task of the organization, however, is one of representation of Nova Scotia's some 4,500 Indians. This task

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requires the Union to liaise with the various departments of Governments of Government at both the Provincial and Federal levels, and with other Provincial and Territorial Indian Organizations . The Union of Nova Scotia Indians is also affiliated with the National Indian Brotherhood. The importance of representation is evidenced by the "Aims and Objectives" written into the Constitution, which are:

(a) The aims and objectives of the Union of N.S. Indians shall relate to the problems of the Indians of Nova Scotia.

(b) Shall act as a liaison with all Indian people keeping in line with all ideas, opinions, and representation of these ideas at the national, provincial, municipal and local level.

(c) Shall promote the welfare and well-being of Indians.

(d) Shall promote progress of all Indians in Nova Scotia, on or off the reserves.

(e) Shall seek and maintain the rights of the Indians of the Province of Nova Scotia and elsewhere and inform the Indians of their rights.

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(f) Shall co operate with non-Indian organizations or agencies in matters pertaining to Indian interests.

For the purpose of information the following are the names and addresses of the Executive and Board of Directors:

President
Noel Doucette
R.R. # 1
St. Peter's Rich. Co., N.S.

Executive Director
Peter Christmas
P.O. Box 961
Sydney, Nova Scotia

Secretary-Treasurer
Stanley Johnson
MicMac Post Office
Hants County Nova Scotia

Vice-President (Cape Breton)
Gregory Johnson
Eskasoni Post Office
Eskasoni Nova Scotia

Vice-President (Mainland)
John Knockwood
MicMac Post Office
Hants County, Nova Scotia

Board of Directors:

Chief Rachael Marshall--S.S. # 1, Box 39, Truro, Nova Scotia
Chief Rita Smith--Box 160, Hants Port, Nova Scotia
Chief Raymond Francis--Pictou Landing, Pictou Co., Nova Scotia
Chief Peter Perro,--Afton, Antigonish Co., Nova Scotia
Chief Richard McEwan--Bear River, Digby County, Nova Scotia
Chief Tom Marshall--R.R. # 1, St. Peter's Richmond County, Nova Scotia
Chief Francis Pierro--Nyanza, Victoria County, Nova Scotia
Chief Noel J. Bernard--Whycocomagh, Inverness County, Nova Scotia
Chief Gordon MacDonald--100 Membertou St., Sydney, Nova Scotia
Chief Dan K. Stevens--Eskasoni Post Office, Eskasoni, Nova Scotia
Chief Charles Labrador--Molega Mines, Queens Co., Nova Scotia

APPENDIX II

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE OF MICMAC EDUCATION

Pre-European Period

Education, in the pre-European MicMac period, was a learning process relevant to the practicality of basic individual and group survival.

This educational system revolved around the MicMacs' political, economic, social and cultural systems, all of which were based on the land they occupied or possessed and the resources therein. (1)

Each phase of this system was not individualistic per se, but interelated as to cause and effect in the communal MicMac life style.

MicMacs were a nomadic hunting and fishing people. Fishing was primarily important in the summer when the patrilineal extended families, which comprised the band, came together on the sea coast. The moose, deer, rabbit and beaver were the most important game animals during the rest of the year. (2)

Any male who killed his first moose could attend public feasts and councils and it was a great cause for celebration. (3)

Females worked with their mothers and sisters "in the making of moccasins and snowshoes to constructing the wigwam and hauling in the slain animals from the woods". (4)

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Thus pre-European MicMac education was based on a self reliant, self taught process through individual and communal experiences by the occupancy and use of their land and its resources.

The arrival of the Europeans, with their colonial economic and land settlement policies, marked the beginning of the end of the MicMac orientated educational system. (5)

The Jesuit Missionaries, in their "soul saving" aspirations provided the only process of formal European education.

As government proceeded with its legislative powers, it deemed necessary to create tracts of land on which Indians would live, thus destroying the last reminents of the original MicMac educational system.

The European influence was paternalistic to the point of creating an atmosphere whereby traditional MicMac systems of politics, economics, social and education, became unworkable in a pro-European dominated society.

The stifling of MicMac politics, as well as, social, cultural and economic systems through the adoption of Jesuit Missionaries religious teachings by theMicMacs, was the final end to true MicMac Education. (6)

In 1842 Nova Scotia passed an act relating to Indian education, the preamble of which declares "where as it is proper to provide for the Education and Civilization of the Aboriginal

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Inhabitants of this Province".

Section I of this act provided for the appointment of a commissioner for Indian Affairs while section VIII empowered such commissioner "to make arrangements with the Trustees or Teachers of any schools or academics throughout the Province for the board and tuition of such number of Indian children as may be desirous of acquiring education and whenever necessary, the expenses shall be paid out of the funds placed at his disposal.

This act marked the end of MicMac orientated education and the beginning of an exposure to European orientated education.(7)

Post Confederation Period, 1867 to Date

From the period July 1, 1867, by virtue of Chapter VI - Distribution of Legislative Power - Section 91 Head 24 of the British North America Act, exclusive legislative authority of the Parliament of Canada extended to all matters coming within the classes of subjects next here-in after enumerated; that is to say, Head 24 - "Indians, and land reserved for Indians".(8)

To implement this dual federal legislative responsibility the Indian Act was introduced and became the legal framework by which the Department of Indian Affairs was created and administered. (9)

Specifically, section 114 to 123 of the Indian Act inclusive, set out the regulations of schools governed under the Indian Act, while Chapter II of the Indian Affairs Field Manuel sets

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out the Policy of Indian Education across Canada.

In the year ended March 31, 1918. There were 14 Federally operated Indian Day Schools with a total enrolment of 105 boys and 115 girls. Of these 220 pupils, 111 were in the primary standard and only seven had reached the sixth or fifth reader.

The current Indian Affairs Branch Education Policy is generally advanced as:

(a) Education is the most important single activity of the Indian Affairs Branch. The Indian citizens of tomorrow are now attending schools, and if our educational policies and procedures are effective and successful we can confidently anticipate a marked acceleration in progress amongst the next generation to build upon the achievements of the Indians of today.

(b) The intention is to provide the best possible educational facilities for all Indian students designed to meet the widely varying needs, circumstances and conditions encountered in the different bands across Canada. These facilities may be in provincial, parochial or private non-Indian schools or in schools operated by the Indian Affairs Branch for Indian Children.

(c) The Indian Affairs Branch is convinced that, where possible, Indian children should be educated in association with

children of other racial groups. Where non-Indian day schools are conveniently located, the Indian Affairs Branch is prepared to enter into agreements with the authorities operating these schools to make possible the admission of Indian children. Tuition grants are available to enable Indian students to attend these non-Indian schools and where necessary Indian Affairs Branch is prepared to provide accommodation for Indian children in joint schools. Instructions regarding the procedure for application for tuition grants and for the negotiation of joint school agreements are included in this chapter of the manual. Segregated education for Indian children is provided for in several types of schools operated by the Indian Affairs Branch to meet varying conditions. The Indian Day School is for the children of Indian parents living a more or less settled existence within a reasonable distance of a central location. The Indian residential school is maintained to provide for children from broken homes or whose parents are unable to provide the proper care and direction, for children of migrant hunters nnd trappers whose way of life makes day school arrangements impracticable and for high school students unable to attend school as day pupils. Schools and rehabilitation centres for both children and adults are operated by the Branch at hospitals functioning under the Indian and Northern Health Services. For the children of migrant parents who return to a summer settlement each year seasonal schools provide an abbreviated school

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